

**South Precinct Email Community Newsletter**  
**August 7, 2009**



Dear Community Friends,

You may recall that back in late June 2009, Seattle Police officers served warrants on south Seattle locations that were found to be buying laptops and other electronics stolen in residential burglaries. As a result of those warrants and the recovery of hundreds of stolen laptops, we saw a decrease in laptop thefts. However, in the past few weeks, it appears that laptop thefts from residential burglaries are on the increase. We wanted to provide you with some security tips specific for your laptop computers.

- Don't Leave Laptops in Plain Sight. Often, our laptops sit on a table near a window and in clear view. When not in use, store the laptop away, out of plain view from the home exterior.
- Record Your Laptop Serial Number, Model Number and Approximate Value. This helps us locate stolen property when we have the serial numbers. In the event the laptop is recovered, there is a much better chance of having the property returned to you.
- Engrave Your Laptop. Using an engraving pen or etcher, etch the item with your driver's license number, or if a company laptop engrave the company name and the last four digits of the company tax ID number. Handheld engravers are available at most hardware stores for less than \$25. Also use this tool to similarly engrave your other electronics (desktop computers, DVD players, gaming systems, etc.). Property that is obviously engraved with a person's or company ID makes that property less attractive to thieves.
- Password Protect Your Laptop. Make it more difficult for someone to access your system and the data in your files.
- Back Up Your Data. This is especially important if you use your laptop for business. Using a \$20 thumb drive to save copies of your files and keeping that drive someplace safe is a better alternative than losing all that data and having to rebuild from scratch.

Below are some commercially available products you may want to consider. An Internet search on any of these terms will provide you additional information, specifications and sources for these items. While the Seattle Police Department does not endorse any one product or company over another, the writer acknowledge Computer Security Products, Inc as the source for some of the information below.



#### **Laptop Security Cable Locks**

Think of it as a bike cable for your laptop. Some of these connect to your laptop's built in security slot and have combination or keyed locks. Just loop the cable around an immovable object and secure it to the laptop security slot. These items range in price between \$20-50.

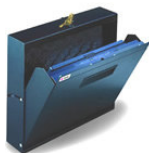
#### **Laptop Tie Down Security Brackets**

These come in many varieties. Some secure the laptop to a surface by bolting the bracket to a surface while others connect to a cable. They can secure the laptop in either an open or closed position depending on the type you get. The price range on these is about \$100-\$120.



#### **Laptop Lockers**

Laptop Lockers are safes designed to securely store laptop computers and other valuables. They can be mounted anywhere and deter theft and unwanted access. These cost around \$125.



**Computer Tracking Software.** These "LoJack for Laptops" software tracks the location of a computer hard drive when that system accesses the Internet and notifies theft recover teams as to it's exact location. Seattle Police recovered several laptops in the past 12 months as a result of this software.

These are just a few ideas. Check with your local computer hardware store or check the Internet for other laptop security options.

Until next time, Take Care and Stay Safe!

Captain David Emerick, South Precinct Commander   Mark Solomon, Crime Prevention Coordinator